"VISIONS BY WOMEN"

WORKSHOPS

FOR

WOMEN OF THE NWT

Rankin Inlet

March 25-30, 1988

Sponsored by:
Kataujak Society, Rankin
and
NWT Advisory Council on the
Status of Women

We would like to thank the
following groups for their
contributions:

- Secretary of State
- NNADP

92-01153/

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Objectives	2
Agenda	4
Evaluation	8
Post Workshop Evaluation	14
Summary	15

Appendix I - Agenda
Appendix II - Individual Evaluations
Appendix III- Statistics on Women in the NWT
Appendix IV - Letters of Support

VISIONS OF WOMEN--PARTNERS IN CHANGE

N.W.T. WOMEN'S WORKSHOP

MARCH 25 TO 29, 1988 RANKIN INLET, N.W.T.

Introduction

During the 1987/88 year, the N.W.T. Advisory Council on the Status of Women initiated a major conference for N.W.T. women. A planning committee composed of the Advisory Council, Women's Secretariat, N.W.T. Native Women's Association, Inuit Women's Association, Immigrant Women's Association, Association Culturelle Franco-Tenoise, Metis Association, Dene Cultural Institute, Yellowknife YWCA and individual committed women began the process of designing the workshop. After several meetings, this committee decided to focus the conference around the personal and community skills necessary for women to take leadership roles in their own communities. Furthermore, the committee insisted that the conference workshops be experiential in nature rather than lecture style so that learning would be on a more profoundly integrated level for the participants.

The Kataujak Society of Rankin Inlet sponsored this conference on March 25-29, 1988 for forty-eight (48) women from twenty-two (22) N.W.T. communities. The workshops were designed collectively by the sponsoring

agency, the planning committee and the workshop facilitators (see Appendix I for list of facilitators). The participants were selected by each sponsoring organization. This selection process was left to the individual organizations, although the planning committee decided to priorize the selection of women already active in their community who needed additional skills in order to assume leadership roles.

A committment was also made ensuring that 25 percent of the participants were young women between 17 and 24 years of age. Prospective participants were informed of the workshops and each wrote a letter outlining her reasons for wishing to attend.

Several federal and territorial government departments were approached for funding. These included the Secretary of State, G.N.W.T. Department of Health and Social Services, the Women's Secretariat; the Federal Department of Health and Welfare; and the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program. Facilitators were hired who had extensive experience working in northern personal and community skills development.

Workshop Objectives

The planning committee felt a mutual concern about the problems and barriers northern women face in both establishing control over their own lives and in directing the course of their communities' development. The rapid transition from one economic/cultural base to another has had a devastating effect for most northerners.

The resulting confusion and societal collapse have proven to be an extra onerous burden for women who also face the inequities inherent in being female. Unemployment rates, education levels, income levels and statistics on family violence confirm the fact that northern women have few of the opportunities necessary to direct the 'systems' which control their lives. They are, however, often on the receiving end of alcohol treatment, safe-home assistance and other remedial social programs. (See Appendix III for a statistical profile of N.W.T. women.)

The workshop organizers decided to start giving women an opportunity to learn the skills, insights and information necessary to impact on their environment from a position of power rather than from one of confused reaction. As a result, it was decided that the workshop would focus on personal insight and confidence building, while at the same time building a sense of commonality amongst the women by introducing collective problem solving and social awareness activities. The planning committee realized that this sense of personal confidence and mutuality amongst the women would be heightened by the participation of women of different ages and cultural backgrounds.

The agenda was planned to be largely experimental in format so that these women would have an opportunity to explore the issues in their lives and begin the process of individual and collective problem solving.

Workshop Agenda

The workshop organizers and facilitators organized the agenda to include a variety of topics and activities that would naturally lead participants into an understanding of their personal lives and into a comprehension of the similarity of their lives.

Once these insights had been established, the agenda lead the participants into a series of experimental activities that would assist them in learning the skills and insights necessary to working collectively to change their lives. In short, the agenda moved from the "personal to the political."

The following is a brief outline of each day's activities:

Day 1

Each day began with a warm-up exercise designed to help the participants become familiar with each other and 'warm-up' to the intended topic areas. On the first day, this exercise was followed by an art therapy activity about each participant's childhood experiences. Sharing these drawings, and the feelings they produced, was the first step in assisting the participants to develop insight into their own life paths, as well as to realize that their feelings and experiences weren't isolated. Many stories, both sad and ecstatic flowed naturally from this exercise, and set the stage for developing insight into their present life situation.

In the next activity, participants again used drawings to pinpoint the positive and negative stress factors in their lives and outline the resulting symptoms. Again, the participants felt the similarity of their situation with others. Most reported experiencing the many symptoms that result from coping with the multiple burdens of child care, paid employment and family problems. Many felt their lives were out of control due to the alcoholism, violence and educational problems in their families and communities.

They reported symptoms such as various addictions, excessive rumination, migraine headaches, eating disorders, chronic fatigue and depression, feelings of worthlessness, anxiety and suicide. The participants shared these insights in small groups and summarized their overall findings in a full group session.

Day 2

On the second day the group broke into two smaller groups for sessions on communication skills and stress reduction. Topics addressed in the communications skills sessions dealt with cultural similarities and differences in communicating, listening and articulation skills. In the stress reduction workshop, participants discussed the stressors over which they had some control and designed methods for altering these situations and changing their responses to negative patterns. Throughout these sessions, the emphasis was placed on positive thinking, self acceptance and mutual understanding. Techniques used included

'medicine' wheels (to emphasize an integrated approach to problem solving), positive affirmations, guided imagery and small group discussion. The day concluded with a session on confidence building. The participants, again using art, had an opportunity to 'publicly' affirm all those things which they found wonderful about themselves. This activity effectively brought the personal awareness section of the workshop to a point where the transition could be made to collective problem solving.

Day 3

This day began with the participants involved in a very graphic physical exercise which helped them experience a collective method of problem solving. This was followed by a concrete problem solving activity. Participants divided into small groups and, using a prepared list of questions, developed an "Action Plan" to problem solve their chosen issue.

Issues that groups focused on included daycare, youth unemployment and delinquency, teaching traditional skills, family violence and alcoholism. These "Action Plans" were later presented to the total group for further input. Most of the participants had not previously experienced this approach to organized collective problem solving.

On the evening of the third day, a banquet was held, followed by entertainment. Many women remarked, in their evaluations, that this evening was a highlight for them. The evening started with traditional Inuit drumming, singing and dancing. Many women took advantage of the opportunity to drum and dance. Several women also tried throat singing. Later, an older Inuit woman played the squeeze box and another the guitar so that the participants had the fun of jigging and dancing. It was great fun for the women to compare and admire jigging styles. The evening ended with a long dance chain. (This part of the workshop was videotaped and is available through the Women's Secretariat.)

Day 4

On the final day, the participants picked one of the "Action Plans" to act out in a socio-drama. Participants took various roles. For example, as elders, as disenchanted young people, as business people, as board members etc. In these roles they acted out the progression of events likely to take place in their communities when the issue of unemployed youth was addressed. When problems arose, participants 're-wrote' the drama as they went along in order to reach a satisfactory conclusion for all the 'community members'. From time to time the drama was stopped so participants could express their feelings and insights. After the socio-drama was finished, participants had an opportunity to discuss the ways in which personal problems become community issues and vice versa.

In the evaluation and closing activities, participants had the opportunity to re-commit themselves to the personal and collective decisions they'd made in order to take more control over their lives.

Workshop Evaluations

Evaluations were done individually and by the whole group. The individual evaluation form and responses are recorded fully in Appendix II. However, it is meaningful to highlight the responses here.

Question #1: "I came to this workshop because..."

Many women responded that they came in order to learn more about themselves and their community. Many were curious to attend a wholly female conference and learn from the other women.

Question #2: "I learned..."

Most participants reported that they learned more about themselves and some techniques for coping with the stress and problems in their lives. They reported an increased awareness of the problems they shared in common with other women of other ages and cultures. Many said that they felt more assertive and realized the importance of caring for themselves. One participant wrote that she learned "that when women come together they are very strong and can make things happen."

Question #3: "And I learned..."

Participants responded to this sentence completion saying that they learned more about communicating (both listening and self-expression) and overcoming shyness. Others responded that they had learned more about how to organize in their community. One respondent reported that she learned "that by putting myself first and getting to know who I am and loving myself again, that I can learn to love others and say no so that I can get their respect and some time to myself..."!

Question #4: "I felt..."

Many participants reported that the workshop gave them a feeling of relief and buoyancy in the discovery that they were not alone in their problems and challenges. Others wrote about their feelings of renewed pride and confidence in themselves. Some responded that they felt an admiration for the women they'd met and were coming home with a sense of inspiration regarding the power of women to overcome societal problems. Many wrote about how they had learned about the variety of feelings women experience. One women's response read, "I felt a sense of relief and now I feel good." Another woman said she felt, "good about myself in solving personal problems. To co-operate, to be part of anything that I want to do, to be able to achieve anything."

Question #5: "Some things I especially liked were..."

Mostly the participants reported that they liked all the experiential activities that gave them an opportunity to 'tell their stories' and feel accepted for who they were. Almost all the participants said they especially appreciated the opportunity to express feelings and experiences they had kept 'locked' inside. As one women said, "I especially liked when we talk or relax and think back to five years old, and being able to say that I am sensational, beautiful, peaceful and thankful." Questionnaires mentioned over and over the value of having younger and older women together for this workshop. The young people and elders themselves pinpointed this as a highlight. One young woman responded that she especially liked "the elders and having them share their wisdom with me." An elder reported that she especially enjoyed learning "how we could be more helpful to the young people in our communities, we can encourage them to lead better lives."

Question #6: "I realize that women in my community..."

Many of the women felt that women in their community needed the benefits of a similar workshop experience in order to realize their own potential and power. As one woman summed up, "...they are afraid and scared due to the fact that they feel they have no value." Other participants pinpointed issues that were predominant in their friends' lives at home. Issues such as lack of affordable daycare, wife beating and isolation were mentioned. However, the majority of participants expressed a desire to work more closely with women in their community in order to change

their collective lot in life. Many hoped that similar workshops could be held in their home town. As one participant stated, "...I realize that women in my community need this kind of workshop to realize what we can achieve -- to be ourselves in home, job, community and the whole nation."

Question #7: "I wish we..."

Almost all the participants responded that they wished this type of workshop could happen more frequently. Many asked that a similar workshop be held in their community or region. Others hoped that the participants of this particular workshop would get together twice a year. Several women wished that the sessions were longer. The following are a selection of comments: "I wish we could keep in contact with each other and be lifelong friends, and meet like this again." "I wish we had more sessions like this for other women to learn as I have from these past few days." One elder wrote that she wished "women (were) more united and help each other not only in their own community, I want women groups to get together from different communities." Another elder said she now believed "that women's groups throughout Canada should help one another by way of consultation."

Question #8: "A decision I have made for myself..."

Most participants reported having made decisions regarding their own mental and physical health. They decided to make more time for themselves and become more assertive in daily life. Many also made decisions to organize support or community development groups. Several

wanted to bring their new found self-awareness and strength to the aid of their friends. As one woman said, "A decision I have made for myself is to take the initiative to start a support group on my own and to practice my new skills starting today, hour by hour." Another woman said that she had decided "to be myself and not what others want me to be." In general, the response to this question reflected the increased amount of control women felt over their lives. One elder summed things up neatly with her statement, "I do not give much credit for the things I am capable of doing myself, now I understand that I can be helpful to others, and also now understand that I have to give some credit to myself, for there are things I am very capable of doing!"

Group Evaluation

The workshop was evaluated verbally by the total group after the individual questionnaires were completed. Following are the questions that were put to the entire group. Their responses are included:

"Did this conference meet your expectations? Did you get what you came for?" The women said it had met and surpassed their expectations.

"What would you change, or what would you like to see different for the next workshop?" Participants said they would like to have longer sessions in each category, six days would have been a better length. However, some women said they wouldn't want to leave their family for

that long. A suggestion was made that two women from each community attend in order to provide support to each other in their organizing work at the local level. Several women felt that the transition from 'personal to political' issues was too fast. Another woman suggested more physical activities and facilities that were more separate from the hotel and allowed for smaller group discussions.

"Name the overall feeling that you have at the close of this workshop." Participants said they felt both "sad" and "exhilarated." Several mentioned feeling a strong sense of "togetherness."

"What made it easy to be here? What made it hard to be here?" The women felt that the general comfort level of the hotel and workshop, as well as the warm welcome, contributed to their sense of ease. It was hard to come away from home due to several practical problems; babysitting, finding taxis, the difficulty of getting information in their town about the workshop. A few women said it was somewhat difficult emotionally to leave their homes.

"Would you recommend another workshop like this? If so, what would you like to see the workshop include? Who should come?" The participants agreed unanimously that there should be another workshop like this one. A wide range of topics was suggested.

These included political issues, business opportunities for women, youth, similar personal skills workshops for men, more information on the N.W.T. Many women said they would like to see a similar workshop with men included.

Post Conference Evaluation

Approximately one third of the workshop participants were contacted 10 weeks after the close of the conference with the goal of ascertaining the long-range effects of the workshop in their lives. All those contacted reported that the outstanding memory of the conference was the feeling of relief and commonality inherent in the discovery that they weren't alone in their private struggles and dreams. The majority mentioned that, until this workshop, they hadn't realized how other women often felt stressed, overburdened and fearful. Nor had they realized that other women wished, like they, to take more control of their lives and begin to work towards their dreams. The effect of this realization and the skills they learned at the workshop had various tangible results in their daily lives. The following is a collection of the comments made by the women who were contacted:

- "It was good to learn the step-by-step way to feel better about myself."
- "I didn't think the things that happened to me could happen to others. I felt very close to the other women."
- "I am less stressed now and worry less. It helped my relationship with my boyfriend."
- "I can understand things in my family and community much better."

- "When I got home I noticed that I felt happier."
- "My mother and I are closer now. She talks to me more and we talk about when we were children."
- "Our women's group would like to have a workshop like that one in our community."
- "When I got home some men asked if they could have a workshop like that."

Many of the women reported on the workshop to their local and regional women's groups. A few discussed the workshop on the local radio station. There was a general consensus that similar workshop should be held at the community level. And, since the workshop, a similar gathering has been requested by the Spence Bay Women's Group and is currently being organized for August 1988. Several women reported that they were now working (both paid and volunteer) in the area of concern they had pinpointed at the conference, eg. youth prevention groups, organizing community events and adult education. A few stated that the improved status of their own home life and personal and mental health was making it possible for them to reach out to work on community issues.

Summary

The educational, financial and social reality for N.W.T. women is extremely harsh. The statistical information alone paints a picture of inadequate finances, illiteracy (the highest level in Canada), high unemployment and a variety of health problems (see Appendix III). While

government programs are necessary, it is essential that women learn how to organize themselves collectively in order to turn the tide of societal disintegration. A prerequisite for this spirit of collectivism is a personal sense of well-being and a feeling of commonality with other women. The Rankin Inlet conference, and its resulting impact, is an example of the amount of personal and communal power freed up when women have an opportunity to understand and appreciate their own uniqueness and similarities. It is also a lesson in terms of education and social change. That is, when an individual's needs are met wholistically (emotionally, physically, socially and intellectually) they begin to take a pro-active role in educating themselves and changing their community.

We have requested that monies left over from this conference be applied towards similar workshops in those communities which request them.

APPENDIX I

AGENDA

N.W.T. WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
MARCH 25-29, 1988

"VISIONS BY WOMEN"

WORKSHOPS FOR WOMEN OF THE N.W.T.
Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.
March 25 - 30, 1988

Friday, March 25

5:30 pm Dinner

Saturday, March 26

8:45 Welcome - Prayer
9:00 Introductions

10:15 Coffee

11:00 **UNDERSTANDING SELF**
Who am I? Where am I going? Wht do I need to get there?

COMMUNICATION SKILLS:
(how to speak so others will listen, listening skills)

noon Lunch

1:30 **MANAGING STRESS:**
(how to cope when things pile up)

2:30 **PROBLEM SOLVING/DECISION MAKING**
(goal setting, priorities,

using time well)

3:30 Coffee

4:00 **SELF-ESTEEM:**
(assertiveness, confidence building, saying "no")

5:30 Dinner

7:00 Films

Sunday, March 27

Prayer

9 am - 12 2 Workshops.
Choose one.

1. **COMMUNICATION SKILLS**
and
SELF-ESTEEM

2. **MANAGING STRESS**
and
PROBLEM SOLVING/
DECISION MAKING

noon Lunch

1:30-5:00 The above 2 workshops will be repeated.
Choose one.

5:30 Dinner

7:30 Get together in the lounge.

Monday, March 28

9 - 12:00 **HOW I HAVE THESE SKILLS-**
HOW DO I USE THEM IN THE COMMUNITY?

We will identify a problem and look at how a group can work on a solution at the community level.

noon Lunch

1:30-5:00 Continue working on a Plan of Action

7:00 Banquet/Feast

Tuesday, March 29

9-12:00 **RESOURCES**
- what are they?
- where are they?
- how do I get them?
- how do I use them?

noon Lunch

1:30-4:00 **SUMMARY/EVALUATION**

We will look at whether this work-shop met your needs and how we can make it better.

4:00 Closing

Have a safe journey home.

Sponsored by:
Katauyak Society, Rankin Inlet
and
NWT Advisory Council on the Status of Women

We would like to thank the following for their contributions:

- Secretary of State
- NNADP

WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

Ms. Jenifer Rigby
GNWT Womens' Secretariat
Box 1320
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Ms. Donna Dupuis
Dupuis and Associates
Box 125
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2N1

Ms. Beth Collinson
GNWT Family Life Education
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

Ms. Mary Beth Zapf
Kalemi Consultants
Box 633
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2N5

APPENDIX II

INDIVIDUAL EVALUATIONS

N.W.T. WOMEN'S WORKSHOP
MARCH 25-29, 1988

QUESTION #1 - I CAME TO THIS WORKSHOP BECAUSE....

... I was interested in it and I have never been at a workshop before and I met a lot of real nice people.

... I was nominated by the BWA (Baffin Women's Association) and wanted to see Rankin and also to learn some techniques for skills.

... I need more self confidence and also it has given me the opportunity to meet new people from different communities.

... I felt that it would help me with my femininity.

... I wanted to look at me rather than all the things I usually do and think about.

... I feel very shy and scared to be as friendly with everyone as I would like to be. I basically needed more self confidence.

... I wanted to have courage, confidence and I wanted to learn about people from different communities.

... everything written down in the agenda looked so interesting. Also, the Adult Educator asked me if I was interested in going to this workshop.

... I wanted to learn.

... I needed to know how to handle stress and be able to continue on my responsibilities - to recoup myself to being strong.

... I got picked from the youth group.

... hoping that it would help me decide whether I should be a working mother.

... I think it is really needed in the community.

... I wanted to learn more about myself.

... I wanted to see what it was like.

... I had to learn how to manage stress and feel good about myself, and learn to communicate, and to meet new women from surrounding communities in the NWT.

... I wanted to observe a women's workshop being successful without men.

... I want advice about the major concerns between women.

... I was asked to by a girl with the NWA.

... I wanted to gain self-confidence and to learn how to help other people without becoming uptight about them or myself.

... it sounded interesting and I felt I would meet more people.

... nobody else wanted to come. They were too busy with their families and husbands or didn't care.

... I had a chance to go myself and see my family and friends at the same time.

... I wanted to regain my self-esteem and to be honest, just get away from Inuvik.

... the company asked me to represent them.

... I needed to learn more ways to hold these workshops in my community and to answer a question that I had.

... I want to learn more about myself and to help my community in any way I can.

... there was room for self improvement.

... I was asked and I thought it would be quite interesting to meet with only ladies attending the workshop.

... I wanted to increase my knowledge in areas of communicating, coping with stress and working and learning from other women.

... I wanted to find out how much more united the women could get, (how they can be one).

... I wanted to learn, for I am not educated.

... I should try to accomplish anything I want to do, I do not have to have low self esteem, I have to be happy.

... I was hoping to find out how life around me can get better.

... I wanted to find out how the other communities operate.

... I wanted to find out about different organizations.

QUESTION #2 - I LEARNED ...

... to really get to know myself.

... more about myself, how to go through a plan of action, to handle and what to look for when I'm in a stress situation, problem solving, and in a guided fantasy I learned about my feelings I have about something that happened many, many years ago. I have learned a lot.

... that I need to express my concerns and needs more clearly. I also learned that a lot of people feel the same way as I do.

... that mothers or people from the community try so hard to keep their children happy (not bored).

... how to get in touch with the little girl and the old lady in me.

... a lot about stress.

... that we all have similar problems, and working together as a group is stronger than working alone.

... that I have to love myself and help others more and have more patience.

... a lot.

... that I have to take care of myself, let others know that I need help too! Time, that I have to say no and accept it instead of feeling guilty.

... more about self-esteem and more about myself.

... that I have to use the talents I have for other people who need them.

... about togetherness.

... it's okay to say "NO".

... a different way to cope.

... to like myself.

... that a lot of people expect women to be reliable without being appreciated as much as men are appreciated.

... that when women come together they are very strong and they can make things happen.

... that I come before anyone (like the wheel).

... that I should like/love myself first before I can like/love the people I want to help.

... to understand who I really am. It helped me to understand how I feel can affect others.

... communication skills.

... to say no.

... a lot ... about myself and other women.

... so much by being here - like self-esteem, how to manage stress and what to do for my personal problems. Most of all, to love myself.

... how to deal more effectively with people around me and in the business place by being more in tune with myself.

... that a lot of communities need more of these workshops. They can be done by people in their own community.

... that I myself come first, before I try to work with others.

... that even though we are from different areas, the problems with getting to know ourselves is basically the same.

... a lot about myself.

... to listen effectively; to be more aware of other people's feelings; that no matter what your experience may be, the emotional effects are the same (emotions are the same in all people); about Inuit women and their life-styles; not to be too hard on myself and therefore on others.

... that as a woman there are many things I am capable of doing on my own, and I also learned to be careful of many things as a women.

... about getting along with others, I understand now that I can be everybody's friend.

... to take more care of myself and others. I outlined the items I enjoyed most and I also included my own ideas.

... have to help others. If others are troubled I have to lend a helping hand.

... to understand and have some ideas as to how life can be more enjoyable.

... we as a group can help women who need help with any kinds of problems.

... more about how a group of certain organization operates.

QUESTION #3 - AND I LEARNED ...

... how to open up.

... that people as they relax become more open and also I learned a little about the diverse cultures in the North, and the problems facing its peoples, as individuals and as an entire communities. Also that the entire group present wanted to help each other in solving these problems.

... that people don't have to act as other people just be themselves.

... I can still care openly and deeply.

... self confidence. I also learned (but not really through the course) to be 100% honest with my boyfriend from now on.

... how to manage stress because some are greater stresses than others.

... about the medicine circle which I never really thought about and that there really are people out there who are willing to help.

... a bit about self esteem and communication.

... that too much thinking holds me back and feeling negative, I never ask for help or I did it all alone, and conflict interfered.

... more about helping the community.

... that I have the right to take care of myself without feeling guilty.

... to start a committee.

... that I am not being selfish if I think of myself first. That I am "#1".

... it was only for females.

... to listen to other peoples problems.

... that women are a success if they really have that goal and especially are committed to their goal.

... that we can do whatever we want whenever we want.

... a lot that I didn't know about we women sticking together.

... that you need to respect the elders and the people who are more experienced before you get involved (with their wisdom and knowledge).

... to communicate, not be shy, speak up, and I am not the only one who has problems.

... how very much we women are united.

... I am not the only one who is taking our communities, responsibilities.

... that someone cares about others. How to be worry free and help others and understand them more.

... that having women of all ages getting together can accomplish new ideas for someone else, also, I have learned a lot from just talking to different people. I benefited from talking and just listening.

... to take the risk.

... that I always knew the answer to the question but I learned that people are going to have to tell me their answer to the question also.

... that by putting myself first and getting to know who I am and loving myself again, that I can learn to love others and say no so that I can get their respect and some time to myself.

... that things really are always not black and white but shades of gray.

... that I am not alone.

... I am a very lucky woman.

... others that were beneficial for me because of my involvement: We have to care for others not only ourselves.

... that I should take good care of myself.

... that if I get a job in any community, that I will be given support for what I am trying to do.

... how we could be more helpful to the young people in our communities, we can encourage them to lead better lives.

... I do not have to work alone, I can talk to other organizations and seek their help.

... that women can be more helpful with each other by keeping in touch with other women groups outside their communities.

... that there are others who are willing to help solve problems that might arise.

QUESTION #4 - I FELT ...

... happy and I felt I learned a lot.

... sad, overjoyed, intense and a sense of well being.

... hope, joy and a feeling of belonging. I also felt comfortable with this group. I also felt gratitude to the organizers for bringing this group together.

... I was part of a group, not alone. I didn't feel like I was the only one that tries to help my friends from doing crimes.

... it made me "get real" about myself.

... happy to be a part of all of these ladies feelings.

... really great and I'll cherish my moments while I was in Rankin.

... really good and more open now that I had this workshop. I hope there will be more of these workshops in a place that is closer.

... ill at ease at first and then more comfortable.

... good about myself in solving personal problems. To cooperate to be part of anything that I want to do to be able to achieve anything.

... good after I met everybody.

... that the workshop was really encouraging for my personal and professional life.

... good about myself.

... anxious, starting to isolate myself and other negative feelings before coming to this workshop.

... happy about it.

... important.

... proud that these women have adjusted so quickly to this kind of life and that most of them are young and more intelligent than the average man.

... that I learned a lot from this workshop because they talked about most of my questions I had and they also answered them.

... a sense of relief and now I feel good.

... very isolated before I went to this workshop, and I realized that other women have gone through some experiences that I felt so alone with.

... refreshed, good around people.

... understood and included and accepted for who I am.

... not alone.

... unity among us women, good about myself, like a new person - more understanding.

... good about myself and others. This opened up a whole new door on my views of people and their deals.

... different forms of feelings and effects we have on one another.

... out of place sometimes and frustrated because I didn't know why some ladies were here when I thought they didn't need to be. But, they might have thought that about me too. I am learning more about who I am, and I am able to be true to myself now.

... that I as a person have my own confidence in myself so that I can help myself and others.

... the warmth and the caring from the different women and the struggling to come together as a group, and the individual struggling to think of ourselves first.

... a lot happier about myself.

... privileged to be here.

... even if anything seems impossible to achieve, we have to struggle and get it going.

... that you can become happier if you communicate to each other often.

... that Women's Groups throughout Canada should help one another by way of consultation.

... that I should help others, other than myself.

... that I learned a lot of things I did not know before. I found this workshop very helpful.

... that we do not have to give up trying even though somethings might seem impossible.

... that we have to work together in our community as a group.

... that this workshop has been a very worthwhile experience for all of us, I wish to see more of this type of workshop in the near future.

... that I have found this very worthwhile, and from the experience I gained, I will be able to pass onto others who would find it beneficial.

... that different Women's Groups should meet together more often.

QUESTION #5 - SOMETHINGS I ESPECIALLY LIKED WERE ...

... meeting people and group discussions and all of the fun and laughs I had here.

... how personal tie sessions were and how well everyone learned and the new people we have met here.

... the entertainment. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the entire workshop however when I was there I enjoyed listening to the views of the people.

... when the youth committee was trying to help the young people from being bored (imagery).

... creative visualization and visualizing my special place.

... what other ladies are feeling like at times when they talked.

... learning how to communicate.

... trying to solve some problems, trying to figure out something, what goes where, like a puzzle.

... the togetherness of the group and the knowledge I have gained.

... when we talk or relax and think back to 5 years old, and being able to say that I am sensational, beautiful, peaceful and thankful.

... when you talk to the people about your feelings.

... the way the things that I have felt in myself were exposed which I wouldn't bring out myself.

... sharing and to give.

... the exercises on stress management and problem solving and the relaxation exercises.

... eating in the restaurant.

... the other women.

... getting into groups talking and organizing amongst ourselves.

... when the old people talked because they know a lot of stories and they have lots of advice.

... meeting other women and working together.

... getting together and getting involved with discussions, how to manage stress, the games and drum dancing, and becoming familiar with the different cultures.

... meeting people, communicating, people having a good time.

... the dedication and good planning of the coordinators.

... working together, so others could gain experience. I have learned to handle situations back in our community.

... talking about our feelings; sharing and caring and understanding one another.

... the elders and having them share their wisdom with me. I also enjoyed my personal conversations with people who I talked to as this will help me be able to deal with myself and my community.

... the icebreakers and group work.

... when we had to draw about ourselves as a child it made me understand a little better how my children may feel at times and how to deal with it.

... talking about me as a person and a woman and that I'm glad to be me.

... the sharing of ideas, and the different opinions that were expressed by the women.

... when we got into groups and found out about each other.

... listening to the women talk about their past experience.

... taking care of yourself, talking happily about yourself, and also taking a look at yourself.

... as I attended the workshop, I learned that I am able to help others in need. I also thought the workshop was excellent.

... more of this type of workshop in the near future. I have gained a lot of knowledge through this one workshop and I feel that it would be very worthwhile if we were to have a similar one soon.

... we have to help each other and when doing so, treat equally.

... understanding how different groups can try hard to achieve their goals together.

... the times we met in different groups.

... discussing how we might be able to help the young people in our community.

QUESTION #6 - I REALIZE THAT WOMEN IN MY COMMUNITY ...

... were open.

... who I respect and like have the skills and attributes that we talked about and learned about here.

... don't realize that change is needed to end the many difficulties facing them. In some cases they feel that they deserve what they get such as being beaten, being mentally abused. They either don't know or don't realize that change is coming. They will have to adjust to fit into the new way of thinking and acting. They have to realize they are people too.

... can't get jobs because they don't have any baby-sitters and if they do they don't have enough money to pay the baby-sitters.

... hunger for this too and rarely find it.

... can work well together and I think they should more often.

... are in need of helpers on how to communicate, how to manage stress, and they need self-esteem too.

... should be more open and let the youth know that they're able to help and we can be one no matter how young or old.

... should try to work as I did.

... need this kind of workshop to realize what we can achieve - to be ourselves in home, job, community and the whole nation.

... ought to get more involved with their children.

... need my input as I can be helpful if I had more self esteem or self confidence.

... would benefit from this.

... have the same problems as I have and that it is important that we get together and do some positive dumping sessions.

... were different types of people.

... have the same problems as me, and that we are all the same with different problems and to help each other.

... got right to the point of things immediately.

... are very experienced in this subject.

... could learn what I did in these few days by my telling them.

... are people and that I wish I had become more involved with each one of them.

... do need to support each other.

... have all the same problems.

... are afraid/scared due to the fact that they feel they have no value.

... need someone to understand them too. Need encouragement. Need someone to care.

... are willing to help. If we can act together as one we will be as one.

... are the same as I am in my problems that I'm not alone.

... need workshops like this and I will try to organize one for them.

... need to realize who they are and how I can help them to understand that they are just as human as the next person.

... would really appreciate this to be brought to the community.

... need to be encouraged.

... may need more support and help than is available to them right now.

... are much like myself and even if anything is impossible to achieve they too have to try hard to accomplish their goal.

... have to keep in touch with each other and work more closely together.

... tend to be apart and often do not help each other, now I understand that we have to help each other and that we could help each other.

... need Women Groups

... have to work closer together with the mothers of young people in each community.

QUESTION #7 - I WISH WE ...

... could have had more time.

... could hold more of these types of workshops so that more women (and men) could grow and learn as we have here.

... snap our fingers and have the changes happen. I wish we could all beccme the self confident, courageous women we need to be.

... could meet more often to see how everyone is doing and keep in touch with everyone.

... could export and transmit this increased sensitivity to all women.

... could all meet again sometime in the future and keep in touch.

... could meet more often because there might be more problems from being on our own again. Maybe I'll even be more confident next time.

... had a longer workshop which could take one step at a time and make sure everybody got the message of what they were trying to teach.

... had learned how to do this a long time ago. I feel it is my responsibility to get involved when needed and to be accepting about it.

... could have stayed longer because I like the meetings.

... could have had a longer workshop and get into more areas.

... could start a workshop in my community.

... had more sessions like this for other women to learn as I have from these past few days.

... could do this more often.

... could have more workshops.

... could have meetings like this two times a week.

... could have more workshops like this so I can learn more.

... could have more time with this workshop - it was fun and educational.

... could get together more to discuss the heavier issues, ie: abortion, midwifery, etc.

... could have longer sessions in each category.

... could meet like this more often.

... didn't have to go away so far from home (have regional workshops).

... could keep in contact with each other and be lifelong friends, and meet like this again.

... that these workshops could happen in different regions and all over the NWT for women and men.

... will be able to keep this spirit alive in us when we are alone in our thoughts and during each day we deal with.

... were in a better location. I liked the community and the people in all but the hotel and the workers at the hotel (the cooks) could have had a little more understanding of our needs.

... had started these kind of workshops a long time ago.

... could have more time to spend discussing different issues.

... could meet like this to encourage each other and work together (maybe once or twice a year?)

... could continue small support groups with the women in this group from each community.

... my wish would be that if the women are faced with a problem, that they as a group try to find answers to their problems.

... could see women more united and help each other, not only in their own community, I want women groups to get together from different communities.

... I could give more credit for the things I am capable of doing myself, now I understand that I can be helpful to others, and also now understand that I have to give some credits to myself, for there are things I am very capable of doing.

... could have this type of workshop done twice a year.

... could have regular meetings to solve problems that are facing us today.

QUESTION #8 - A DECISION I HAVE MADE FOR MYSELF ...

... is to remember I am "number one" and in order to love others I have to love myself first.

... is that with the knowledge I have learned here I will share while working with myself, family, work and community involvement.

... is to think of myself first and to take better care of myself. To live my life the way I want to and to be happy.

... is to help the youth get help or help organize a youth committee and keep them from being bored.

... is to try to keep working on keeping the feeling (to keep on keeping on!)

... is to be honest with the people I care about. To be more confident.

... is to try and have a meeting for ladies with problems in my community as soon as possible. I'd like to be like a counsellor for women with stress.

... is that I'll be open to help people who I think need it and to work on myself also because I wasn't all that perfect after all.

... is to take care of myself first.

... is to take care of myself and go to meetings that I want to go to. Be strong in understanding some feelings and to say NO! when I have to. Make my decisions instead of others saying it for me. To love myself more. Be easy going with others. Not to be negative. Go out and ask for it when I need help. To talk to others or to tell others to feel comfortable about it.

... is to talk to my friends and family about what I have done.

... is to try to join more women's activities locally and nationally or regionally.

... is to work on myself more.

... is that I am going to look after and care for myself before others.

... is that I'd like to be an RCMP.

... is to learn how to manage my stress, not to worry that much and to set goals for myself.

... is not to let myself feel down all the time.

... is to find out who I am.

... is to be myself and not what others want me to be.

... is that I will learn to have more respect for elders and people in general, and that I will become involved and let people know that I care.

... is not to let myself down no matter what happens. I've decided not to let my work problems enter my home life because I now know that if I am unhappy my children will feel unhappy. I've decided to speak up for myself so others can know how I feel.

... is to take care of my health, spiritually - how good I feel inside, physically - to eat well and appreciate fresh air (which is free), and mentally - to continue confiding in my good friend who is full of understanding. She helps when I need her and I try to do the same. Last but not least I wish to be able to thank God for all he provides me with to the end of my days.

... is to learn to practice what I have learned to help women about themselves.

... is that I am "Me" and I will try and help other women learn more of what I have learned.

... to help my people (community) in any way that I can. And to also help myself and take care of myself as an individual.

... is to take the initiative to start a support group on my own and to practice my new skills starting today, hour by hour.

... is to have these types of workshops in my meetings in each community I go to.

... is that I'm going to make time for me and me alone, and learn to say "NO" when necessary.

... is not to be shy, to participate, and to change the things that within myself I can, to accept the things that I can't and to know the difference.

... is to make more time to look after my needs.

... is to work on our goals that we established during our workshops.

APPENDIX III

STATISTICAL INFORMATION: N.W.T. WOMEN

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

N.W.T. WOMEN

Education[1]

- there are 16,435 women over age 15 in the N.W.T.
- 34% of all N.W.T. women have less than Grade 9
- 62.5% of all N.W.T. native women have less than Grade 9
- 7.6% of all N.W.T. women have a secondary school diploma only
- 20% of all N.W.T. native women have achieved a grade level over Grade 9

Labour Force[2]

- 20.3% unemployment rate for N.W.T. women 15-24 years old
- 17.1% unemployment rate for N.W.T. women of single status
- 28.3% unemployment rate for N.W.T. women with less than Grade 9
- 25% unemployment rate for all N.W.T. native women (8% for non-native women)
- 33.5% N.W.T. women employed in clerical occupations

1 N.W.T. Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census
2 N.W.T. Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census

Income[3]

- N.W.T. women earn 64% of average male income
- N.W.T. women earn $10,000/year less than the average male income (full time employment)
- average annual income for female single parent is $20,477.00

Legal[4]

- 50% female offenders are Inuit
- 34.1% are Indian
- 9.1% are Metis
- 6.8% are "other"
- 90% of female offenders have Grade 10 or less

Health[5]

- 20% of all live births are to N.W.T. teenagers
- infant death rate is 16 times higher in the Inuit population than in the non-native population
- death by suicide is three times higher Inuit/Indian populations than in non-native populations

3 N.W.T. Bureau of Statistics, 1986 Census
4 N.W.T. Department of Corrections
5 Report of Health Conditions in 1985: National Health & Welfare Canada

APPENDIX IV

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

N.W.T. WOMEN'S WORKSHOP
MARCH 25-29, 1988

KATANNAQ SOCIETY
ᑲᑕᓂᓇᖅ ᓴᓪᓕᐊᓂᖅ

Kataujaq Society,
P.O.Box 132,
Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.
X0C 0G0
November 30, 1987

Mr. Joan Dania
Manager,
Secretary of State,
Yellowknife , N.W.T.

RE: N.W.T. WOMEN'S [illegible]

Dear Sir:

Attached please find copies of our minutes of the meetings in August and July of this year to indicate our decisions to become involved actively in the organization and the running of the above mentioned Conference.

The Kataujaq Society is most excited to be able to participate in this Conference and since the Conference is being held in our Community of RAnkin Inlet to Host the Conference.

The Keewatin Region needs additional information and assistance to encourage the participation of women in projects, in positions of leadership and generally in the volunteer and Community areas that can be needed. This Conference we feel which will allow women from the entire Territories to come together, to discuss the things they have in common and to explore areas that can be shared by them is bound to have multiple spin-off effects.

Thank-you for considering the project.

Sincerely

Caroline Anawak,
Chairperson

multicultural association of the nwt
P.O. Box 2051
Yellowknife, N.W.T. X1A 2P5
(403) 920-2382

December 9, 1987.

Jean-Denis Dalphond,
Dept. of the Secretary of State,
c/o National Advisory Council on the Status of Women,
Box 1320,
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Jean-Denis;

Please accept this letter as an indication of the support that the Multicultural Association of the N.W.T. maintains for the conference being sponsored by the Katauyak Society in Rankin Inlet from March 29 - 31, 1988.

This conference promises to be an exciting event for northern women as it's intention is to help provide women with the skills, the knowledge and the tools to participate more fully within their community . By providing a basis for such activities, the Katauyak Society will also promote a more active networking system for northern women so that they will form a viable support and resource group. By addressing womens' problems in the north, solutions to these problems may be found.

The Multicultural Association supports endeavors such as this conference because of the parallels to our own goals. The Association is trying to establish a support group for immigrant women and is very pleased to see other organizations attempting to provide similar support mechanisms for all northern women.

Yours Very Truly,

Sheila Bassi,
Executive Director.

P.O. Box 2482
Inuvik, NWT
X0E 0T0

04.12.87

Secretary of State
c/o Woman's Secretariat
Government of the NWT

To whom it may concern,

REGARDING TERRITORIAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Please be advised that the Inuvik Women's Group passed a resolution at their meeting of 03.12.87 supporting the Kayauyak Society of Rankin Inlet's request that the Secretary of State provide financial support for their proposal that a Northern Women's Conference be held in Rankin Inlet in March 1988.

The Inuvik Women's Group feels that this conference, "Visions by Northern Women" will be a valuable forum for us to discuss community development issues. We hope to continue our involvement in planning and facilitating workshop sessions at this important event.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact undersigned collect on (403) 979-7291 (work) or 979-2374 (home).

Sincerely,

Jennifer Trembley
Secretary

cc: President,
Kayauyak Society, Rankin

Jennifer Rigby
Women's Secretariat, GNWT

All members,
Inuvik Women's Group

Dene Cultural Institute
P.O. Box 207
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2N2
(403) 873-6617

DEC 0 1 1987
Women's Secretariat

HAND DELIVERY

December 1, 1987

Secretary of State
c/o Women's Secretariat
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

To Whom it may concern:

The Dene Cultural Institute would like to express its' support for the series of workshops entitled 'Visions by Women' sponsored by the Katouyak Society of Ranklin Inlet. We believe that these workshops will be of benefit to women through the sharing of their respective experiences in various aspects of community development and will ultimately be of benefit to northern communities overall.

We look forward to the participation of Dene women in this forum.

Sincerely,

Joanne Barnaby
Director

The Hay River Women's Centre
Box 278
Hay River, NWT
X0E 0R0

Jean-Denis Delphone
Secretary of State
c/o The Women's Secretariat
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NWT
X1A 2L9

November 30th, 1987

Dear Mr. Delphone;

The Women's Centre would like to lend its support to the meeting planned by the Katauyak Society in Rankin Inlet for March of 1988.

We believe that the women of the north will benefit greatly. Women in isolated conditions must be provided with opportunities to increase their awareness of the issues which they have chosen. The Katauyak Society is providing northern women with this opportunity to share their concerns, to network and thus to increase their effectiveness.

We hope that your department can assist in creating this opportunity.

Sincerely

Joanne (Jodi) Whyte
Executive Director

ᐊᓕᓚᐃᑦ ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᑲᑎᒪᔨᖅᑐᑦ

PAUKTUUTIT

Inuit Women's Association

RECEIVED
DEC 0 1 1987
Women's Secretariat

December 1, 1987

Mr. Jean Denis Dalphond
Department of the Secretary of State
c/o Women's Secretariat
Government of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

Dear Jean Denis:

This is to express support from Pauktuutit for the Katauyak sponsored NWT Northern Women's Conference, which will be held at the end of March 1988 in Rankin Inlet. We feel that this conference is an activity which is very much in line with the objectives of Pauktuutit. It will provide northern women with an opportunity to talk to each other and to gain ideas on how to improve the quality of life in our home communities.

Sincerely,

Mary Sillett
President

:syt

BAFFIN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
BOX 1079
IQALUIT, NWT, X0A 0H0

The Department of the Secretary of State
c/o The Women's Secretariat
Box 1320 Yellowknife, NWT

The Baffin Women's Association would like to inform you of our support for the Northern Women's conference " Visions by Women" (Workshop Community Development) being planned for the last week of March in Rankin Inlet.

Conferences such as this one are of benefit to all women, in developing and increasing their awareness of issues facing women today. They help to increase the self confidence of individual women, fostering the growth of leadership and community development skills. This will be of benefit, not only to each individual woman who attends, but also to the communities to which these women return following the conference. The conference also holds many benefits for the community of Rankin Inlet, through the increased awareness of women's issues that will spring from the conference.

Sincerely,

Sharon Buness

Sharon Buness
President